

I support media diversity

Please keep current media ownership rules. I feel that allowing the new rules to take place will create a monopoly that cannot be reversed. Our local TV station channel 12 is part owned by the Arizona Republic (Gannett) and I constantly hear "read the AZ Republic for more news" or "go to azcentral.com for more related news" while spending all their on air time telling us about the latest dogs to get married, some kid's 10 foot snake, or which movie was number one at the box office. I ask, is this real news? I see the new rules allowing this to only get worse, with special interests being the owners and thus controlling what we hear and see even more so than today. What I am asking for is to keep choices available for me and my fellow Americans.

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Thank you,
Respectfully,
Ericka Cero Wood